

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF RESETTLEMENT

SCHEMES IN ADAMAWA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Large-scale relocation of families and individuals such as that occasioned by road construction, industrial projects and general urban planning, renewal and rehabilitation programmes necessarily raises questions of welfare, compensation, public policy etc. Consequently this paper examines the problems and prospects of resettlement schemes in Adamawa State.

The paper identified, among other problems, the issue of acceptability of the scheme, finance, manpower and hiccups in compensations. It made proposals and recommendations for effective implementation of resettlement schemes in Adamawa State.

KEYWORDS: Urban Planning, Renewal and Rehabilitation Programmes, Questions of Welfare, Compensation

INTRODUCTION

Many studies have been conducted World Wide regarding displaced people and their adaption to their new environment Salami (2014). Yusuf, (1979). World Bank, (2015). UN-HABITAT, (2006). Mbibi, (1986). Most of the reports indicate a negative response to relocation. Resettlement schemes are becoming techniques of planning for rural dwellers. Without a clear assessment and identification of their problems and prospects, efforts of planners may be futile.

The overall development of an area, region or nation can be stimulated through rural development. Various attempts to improve rural conditions have therefore been undertaken by various governments of developing countries and has since taken the form of resettlement schemes in most cases induced by activities like disease control, flooding, renewal programmers, national and man-made calamities, city development and dam construction.

Against this background, this paper aims at Identifying reasons and types of resettlement assess selected resettlement schemes in Adamawa State, make proposals and recommendations for effective implementation of resettlement schemes in planning and development of Adamawa State.

RESETTLEMENT

Resettlement is a project involving the plan and controlled transfer of population from one area to another. For Omar,(1986) resettlement means the transfer of population from one area to another on a planned bases, the objective being to raise the standard of living. Throughout history \man has been settling or resettling in different places either on his own accord or because of disaster such as drought, earthquakes, desertification etc.

REASON FOR THE RESETTLEMENT

In spite of the dearth of recorded information on evaluation of resettlement programmes, resettlement schemes are often regarded as the sole strategy for rural development and planning. This could have been due to the following reasons among others: Resettlement takes place when buildings have to be rebuilt or repaired to give an area a face lift.

For instance the need for Jambutu resettlement arose after the creation of the then Gondola State in 1976. There was need for road expansion and a better environmental quality due to the influx of people into the state capital for obvious reasons. To achieve this, the government had to replan the ancient settlement to reduce overcrowding and to introduce new elements to the township.

Natural disaster may bring about resettlements. It acts as a catalyst within a built-up environment. When natural disaster occur the victims have to move to another location: The resettlement of Loko flood disaster victims in Song Local Government Area was one of the first involving resettlement exercise carried out by the then Gongola State Government. The removal and resettlement of the people from the flooded areas was the only solution. In most cases the affected people were allocated pieces of land to build their homes.

It could come as a result of irrigation to improve agricultural production: The then Gondola State government commissioned the International Planning and Environmental Consultants, Nigeria Limited otherwise known as Implement To undertake the preparation of a master- plan for the resettlement of people to be displaced by the Kiri- Dam, itself a World Bank Project for the irrigation of the extensive Savanna Sugar Plantation. The resettlement project area is situated within Guyuk and Shelleng Local Government Areas.

TYPES OF RESETTLEMENT

Generally, resettlement can be of two types both are intended to improve the life of the people to be resettled. These are compulsory (or forceful) and voluntary resettlements

COMPULSORY OR FORCEFUL RESETTLEMENT

This is sometimes called involuntary movement. It is mostly as a result of Government action which must be obeyed. The various reasons for movement are either due to national insecurity, the spread of epidemic disease, urban renewal, provision of irrigation facilities in most cases, environmental alteration as a result of engineering project. As the name implies, it is a planned resettlement scheme which is initiated and executed by Government's desire to accelerate development. Natural calamities can also induce compulsory resettlement. The resettlement of Loko people in Adamawa State due to flood disaster is an example. On the other hand, communal clashes like the kataf-Hausas and Jukun-Tiv clashes can bring about compulsory resettlement.

VOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT

Under this system, the individual is left with initiation and subsequent movement and resettlement with or without Government involvement. Resettlement is spontaneous. Abu (1986) notes that: 'there are instances when villagers and villages on their own, move to what they considered 'better location', usually dictated by the location of newly provided infrastructural facilities or by availability of large expanses of fertile agricultural land' An example of people initiated resettlement scheme is that found among the Tsuntaye villages located along Malunfashi-Yashe road in Kankia Local Government Area of Katsina State. Others are the villages found along Gombe- Yola road or Yolo-Song road where people

resettled in need of accessibility and development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS: Assessment of Selected Resettlement Schemes

The Jam butu Resettlement Scheme

The Jambutu Resettlement Scheme was initiated by the then Gongola State government in 1976, when the state was created and Yolo was made its headquarters. The Jambutu Resettlement Scheme was intended to meet the following objectives:

- To construct and expand roads within the state headquarters
- To reduce the problems of congestion within the capital
- To build and rebuild the structures within the capital in order to give the capital a mean urban outlook (Morphology)
- To provide infrastructural facilities that would support the population besides the provision of big markets, mosque, churches, post offices and schools within the capital.

The scheme succeeded initially but latter failed. The failure arose because of lack of a well articulated enlightenment and systematic study of the socio-economic and cultural background of the people. In the light of this, most of the people sold their plots and abandoned the sites. The abandonment of the site was also due to the lateness in the provision of infrastructural facilities, services and utilities (FUS).

The Loko Resettlement Scheme

The loko Resettlement Scheme was brought about as a result of natural calamity. The resettlement of the people was due to flooding of the original settlement. The resettlement of the Loko flood victims was one of the first involuntary resettlement carried out by the then Gongola State government Omar, (1996). This kind of resettlement can sometimes take the form of cash compensation as relief. On the other hand, the affected people may be allocated pieces of land to build their homes as in the case of Loko flood victims.

Like Jambutu, the scheme succeeded initially but later failed. The disadvantaged homeless people of the area abandoned the site given to them to build. Services were not provided on the chosen site, aside victim grieve over their lost homes because of their attachment to the previous location since they had spent a long time in the previous site. Old Loko is also strategically located on the Yolo-Song highway.

Problems of Resettlement Schemes

The relocation and displacement of economic life –line of the people by Town Planners who usually impose their ideas on settlement is a serious problem. The rural man depends on agriculture for his food, shelter and clothing but in planning or settling them, con to this basic way of life is usually given a secondary treatment this is a serious problem that have been found in all the resettlements.

There is also a problem of lack of general awareness of the concept besides the lack of general acceptability of the schemes. The people involved lack a general awareness of the scheme, therefore the people's (citizens) participation is lacking. They do not accept the exercise and this militates against the success of the exercise.

Financial problems affected the schemes most especially those of Look and Jambutu. The problem was compounded by embezzlement of compensation funds by concerned authorities. Compensation was not executed appropriately. There was use of dictated valuation methods prescribed by the government. There was delay in the payment of amounts actually assessed during compulsory acquisition. Besides, there was rejection of expert valuation and the sidelining of the chief land officer as the presiding officer or appropriate officer responsible for assessing the property to be compulsorily acquired. This brought about inadequate compensation. Lack of funds brought about lack of services in the chosen site.

The problem of manpower particularly, Town Planners affected almost all the resettlement scheme. The schemes were dominated by administrators, architects, surveyors and civil engineers who have no knowledge of Land Use Planning within the context of planning or resettlement and this affected the timing of the whole exercise.

Grieving for a Lost Home

Usually when people are forcibly ejected from their former homes, they become psychologically disturbed. This is because of the strong attachment to former residences and neighborhoods. Grieve comes as a result of the painful filling of loss and anger for being displaced. When asked how they felt when they learnt or saw their houses being pulled down or were told to leave their known surroundings for Jambutu which is on the outskirts of Yola Town some people expressed strong feelings by saying that they felt as though their heart were taken out of them. Others indicated feeling cheated, terribly sad, did not want to loose their homes or felt like crying anytime they passed by. Others yet indicated loosing friends and long established contacts with some relatives. These therefore clearly portray the anguish felt by households when displaced.

Quality Housing

Personal interviews revealed that prior to relocation most household lived in good and standard houses. The houses in the former settlement were generally built with cement blocks, bricks or concrete with zinc roofing. They also had walls surrounding the compound for privacy and cultural reasons whereas those at the resettlement sites were built with mud and matting or “Zana” or thatch as roofing materials. The households were also surrounded for the same reason as above.

Poor accommodation could be as a result of inadequate compensation. According to Hamid (1986), 72% of those compensated and resettled claimed they were paid late and the amount given could not purchase the building materials needed to either construct part of their demolished house or to erect new ones at the new plots. They also claimed that the authorities did not provide materials at subsidized rate.

Increase in Distance to Activity Places

Jambutu being on the outskirt of town, far away from the hustle and bustle of the city centre attracted increased journey activity to places e.g. Work market, hospital etc it does consumes additional transport fares and longer time. Getting transport to the site is usually very difficult and since most of the relocates were low and middle income earners, they find it economically detrimental to settle there especially since they depended on the city centre for virtually everything.

Change of Occupation

The affected people were mainly engaged in the informal sector of the economy e.g. carpentry, craft-work tailoring, driving, trading, farming, mechanics, butchers, messengers etc. It was discovered that only 5% of those relocated were farmers but after relocation, the number rose to 20%. This was due to the fact that there was more land available. And also the encouragement given by the Upper-Benue River Basin Development Authority by the establishment of a sprinkler irrigation system near the settlement which became added advantage to the farmers. Because of the site's isolation within any reasonable walking distance from the rest of James town and its proximity to the Benue River Bank, it resulted to increase in the shift of occupation of households from other jobs to farming and fishing.

Facilities, Utilities and Services (Fuss) or Site and Services availability

Perhaps this is the single most contributing factor for people refusing to settle at Jambutu. Facilities refers to the presence of support facilities e.g. schools, fire and police post, parks, clinics etc. include roads, drainage, pipe-borne water and electricity.

Services mean a combination of both including the provision of recreational facilities. The Jambutu resettlement site has a poor road network made of late rite. The only tarred road is the Double -Neman bye-pass which is several hundred meters away from the site the roads are erosion prone and are highly inaccessible during rains. The most common transport mode is the kidnapped or tri-cycle transport and they charge exorbitantly.

ELECTRICITY: Has only been recently connected to the area. At the time of relocation there was no electricity

Water: The site still has no pipe-borne water, however there are bore-holes serving the population. Others fetch water from wells and the river or buy from water hawkers. The total or partial lack of FUS added to the dislike of the majority of the relocates for the site, because they felt they could not afford the added cost of living.

Drainage: The area is poorly drained and is inaccessible during rains. The following proposals are advanced: Individuals to be resettled, should be encouraged to co-operate with the government in ensuring the success of the scheme. This can only be achieved through enlightenment of the citizens involved. Notices for the exercise should be given in good time to encourage people's participation. This will also bring about smooth movement of the people involved. Adequate site and services among other things would bring about success of the scheme.

Resettlement schemes have hitherto been dominated by non- professionals instead of Town and Country Planners. This should be corrected since the planners have enough knowledge of Land Use Planning, sub-division and regulation within the context of planning and resettlement. It would be appropriate for them to be effectively involved.

Resettlement sites should as much as possible be located near the former settlement or other settlements so as to ease the feeling of isolation. As much as possible, it should be close to a major highway for ease of communication, For example though vine inland is on the outskirts of James town like Jambutu, it is however more easily accessible than Jambutu. This is because the James- Moby road is a but say road and Venice Lang is just by the road side.

Government should also make it a point of duty to provide the site with a neighborhood shopping centre, a good market, a well equipped clinic, a park or play ground, or a civic function area, a primary and or secondary school, a viewing centre to mention but a few

In order to stop property under- rating government should Endeavour to use expert property values i.e. the

quantity surveyors and estate values so that the current actual monetary worth of the property is given. The delay in the payment of the amount actually accessed as of the time of compulsory acquisition should be stopped.

One of the problems faced by relocates is the escalating prices of building materials. This to some extent stops them from owning a house after displacement or resort to house construction using temporary materials. It is suggested therefore that building materials be provided at subsidized rate to relocated people. It will be most appropriate if the government gives out plot first- complete with site and services- before paying compensation so that relocates can build their plot immediately. It will also minimize the channeling of compensation money into other uses. Another way could be to pull down a few houses at a time and at the same time creating space while constructing the roads and encouraging households to team up and construct storey buildings within the same vicinity to replace the demolished ones, so as to allow the peoples continued stay in their beloved locality instead of relocation.

This suggestion however may not be applauded for cultural reasons, preference or life. Style.

CONCLUSIONS

Generally the prospects of any resettlement scheme lies in the ability to maximize the use of scanty physical and human resources in ensuring the success of the scheme. The future of resettlement scheme is characterized by lack of citizenship participation, faulty implementation strategy and lack of effective organization or co-ordination.

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